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## THE PARISH OF SAINT MONICA **WE ARE ONE**

*Enthusiastic disciples of Jesus Christ who bring God's love to all*

### **A Message from the Pastor**

6 January 2012

Dear Friends of Saint Monica's Parish,

Archbishop Charles J. Chaput has decided to accept the recommendation of the Blue Ribbon Commission and as a result, Saint Monica's School will be closed at the end of this school year. Saint Patrick's School in Malvern will also close and we will form a new regional school at the Malvern campus. As I am sure is the case for many of you, I am saddened and disappointed by this news, yet I understand the reasons for it. At the elementary level, a total of 37 regional schools will be formed, impacting 85 current Parishes or regional schools. At the secondary level, five high schools will be closed. These changes are focused on the ability to provide quality, affordable and sustainable Catholic education for present and future generations across the Archdiocese.

On December 20, I attended a meeting of our Pastoral and Finance Councils, the school administration, and the Presidents of the Home and School Association. We met proactively to discuss the Archbishop's potential announcement and I want you to know that we agreed that we would work diligently to make the transition to the new model of Catholic school education as seamless as possible for our children, our school staff, and our community.

There are many questions about the specifics of how this will work for which I do not yet have answers. Mrs. Hoban and I need to attend another meeting on Tuesday, January 10 where the Archdiocese will share more details on how this consolidation will take place and how it will impact our students, families, faculty, and administration. I will share that information via email as soon as I have it. I also plan to meet with the Pastoral and Finance Councils the week of January 16 to

develop a more detailed transition plan.

In the meantime, you can watch the Archbishop's news conference live on the Archdiocesan website at [www.archphila.org](http://www.archphila.org) at 4:00 p.m. today. At the conclusion of the news conference, a new website, [www.faithinthefuture.com](http://www.faithinthefuture.com) will go live and offer tools to guide us through the coming days, weeks, and months ahead.

For more than a year now, we have been sharing our parish vision that, "We are One - enthusiastic disciples of Jesus Christ who bring God's love to all." One of the things that impresses me about the faith community at Saint Monica's is our ability to come together in times of great joy and great sadness and be united as one with our God. All of us will need that in these next few months and in a special way, our school students, faculty, staff, and families will need it. As mentioned earlier this week, we will have a short prayer service tonight at 5:30 p.m. in the Church. We will gather to remind each other that Jesus is always with us in times of transition and change and to be a support for the members of our community most directly affected by this news.

Archbishop Chaput recently informed us that 2012 would be a challenging year for the Church in Philadelphia. I know the uncertainty of the past few weeks have been very difficult for our school faculty and administration, our school families, and for me personally, and the love and support of this community has made this time easier to handle. I promise you my prayers, love and support as we move through these changes together. I ask you to continue to pray for me, for Archbishop Chaput, and for all those in leadership in our Church. Pray that we may be wise in our decisions and loving in our communications - and pray that most importantly, we all can be worthy instruments of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Sincerely Yours,  
*Father Trader*

P.S. If you have any questions or would simply like to discuss things with me, please call the rectory at 610-644-0110 and we can set up a time to speak.



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